

THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The Vision

To build upon the rich history of the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee communities, focusing on community assets and strengths, increasing capacity of agency partners and anchor institutions, and transforming challenges into opportunities for sustainability and growth.



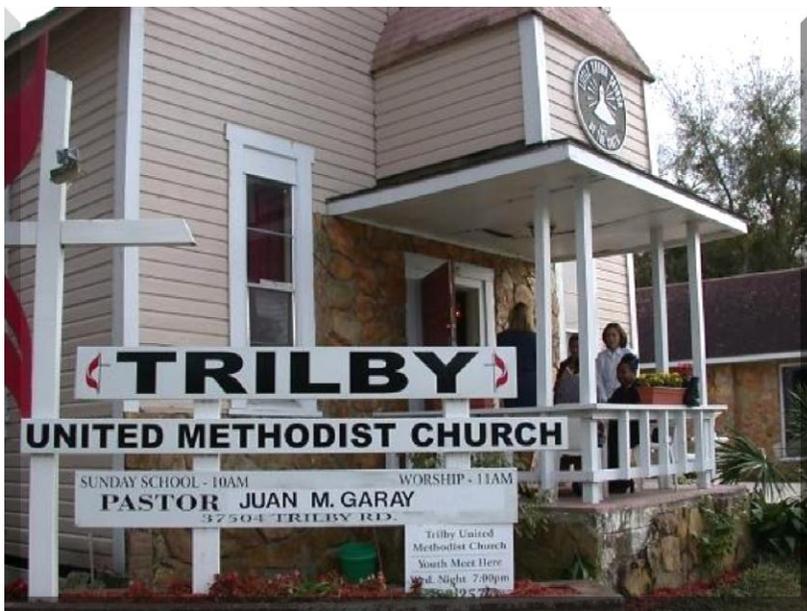
Background

The Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee area is a 2.5 square mile neighborhood located in the northwest corner of Pasco County. The area is classified as a transportation disadvantaged community by Pasco County's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and is historically one of the most underserved communities in terms of public and social services,

housing quality, and economic opportunities. The closest city is located seven miles away, directly south along U.S. Highway 301. While the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee community does have its unique set of challenges, it has a significant element of community pride and engagement that exceeds many larger and more affluent communities in the County.



The Lacoochee-Trilby Transformation Plan built upon the high level vision to identify specific infrastructure improvements necessary to provide a comprehensive improvement to the quality of life for residents in the communities, identified concepts to create a gateway into Lacoochee through Cummer Road, and also addressed significant resident concerns related to public safety and community identity.



Many of the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies identified in the Lacoochee-Trilby Transformation Plan were identified as a result of the strong relationship between the County and the stakeholders living and working in the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee communities. The Program Amendment for the Section 108 funds was approved in 2013, reallocating funds to the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee area and granting Pasco County the opportunity to tackle significant infrastructure improvements necessary to improve the quality of life in the community. Additionally, Pasco County and Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative, Inc., received the Rural Community of the Year Award for work done in connection with the community residents and stakeholders. A Tax Increment Financing District has been established in the community, utilizing the same boundary as the Lacoochee-Trilby Transformation Plan,

providing a dedicated funding source for critical infrastructure and facility improvements. These examples are some of the short term successes that have enabled the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee community to improve upon its historical foundation and lead to improvements in the overall quality of life for its residents.



Neighborhood Lead

In order to facilitate many of the improvements to the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee community, Pasco County served as the neighborhood lead. This is due to the fact that many of the funding sources fall under Pasco County's umbrella, and there are many community improvements already in process.

Emphasis Area 1: Cummer Road Improvements

Current Conditions

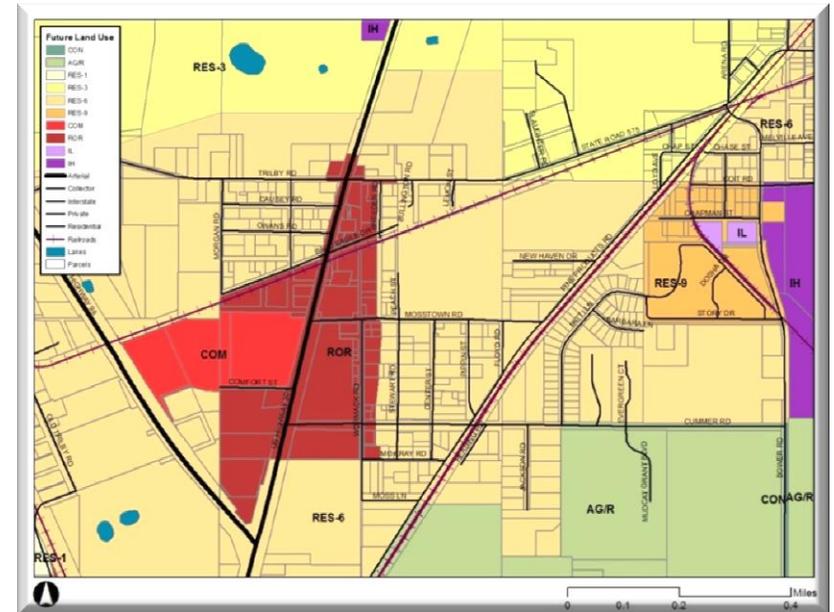


Cummer Road is the prime pedestrian road within the Lacoochee neighborhood connecting U.S. 301 to key neighborhood assets such as the neighborhood convenience store, public housing, Stanley Park and the Lacoochee Elementary School. It extends from Bower Road at the Lacoochee Industrial Park site in the east to U.S. 301 towards the west. Most of the area around Cummer Road falls under Res-6 (Residential – 6 dwelling units/acre) Future Land Use, except for the area around the intersection of U.S. 301 and Cummer Road and towards the east of Bower Road.

Although currently well used and strategically connected to most of the neighborhood amenities, the corridor is characterized by a severe lack of sidewalks that makes it unsafe and uncomfortable, especially for walking and bicycling. In addition to this, land uses located towards its east generate truck traffic that interferes with the slow moving pedestrian and bicycle traffic generated from the school and the surrounding neighborhoods. To ensure that a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment is maintained within the neighborhoods, it is essential that existing uses that are incompatible with residential uses should be accessed through

alternate routes, visually treated, and if appropriate, phased out.

In terms of ownership, the majority of land along Cummer Road is privately owned. There are other major large parcels (approximately ten to 27 acres) abutting Cummer Road that are owned by the County, PCHA and the School Board. The few publically owned parcels provide opportunities for creating the much needed public space. Also, the close proximity of some of these parcels such as the Lacoochee Elementary School and the community center along Cummer Road, provides a unique opportunity to create a focal point for the surrounding neighborhoods and Lacoochee communities.



Walkability and Streetscape Evaluation

Cummer Road currently lacks certain key pedestrian amenities that are essential to support safe and comfortable pedestrian activity. Some of these are outlined below:

- There is a lack of adequate sidewalks and bike lanes along Cummer Road; and existing sidewalks are discontinuous, afford very few connections to surrounding areas, and are of insufficient width.
- Sidewalks are needed to connect the transit stop on Cummer Road to residential neighborhoods and other key anchor points.
- Pedestrian crossings are needed on Cummer Road.
- The presence of truck traffic on Cummer Road, in addition to the lack of adequate sidewalks, creates unsafe roadway conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Absence of pedestrian infrastructure such as benches and streetlights.
- There is a need for street trees or street side landscaping to provide shade and comfort, and also to act as a buffer between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Goal: Cummer Road Safety and Pedestrian Experience Improvements

Objective: Improve pedestrian accessibility along Cummer Road and address concerns related to key intersections.

Strategies:

- Improve pedestrian access, user comfort, and visibility of bus stops by installing street lights, trash receptacles and benches.
- Areas around the bus shelters should be designed to be as attractive as possible by including benches, lighting, street trees, bus route information boards and clear signage scaled and oriented to the pedestrians. All transit shelters should be provided outside the 'Clear Zone' within the sidewalk.
- All key intersections on Cummer Road should be appropriately treated to improve safety, comfort, and visibility.
- Create clear spaces to handle pedestrians; unobstructed spaces to facilitate safe crossing of Cummer Road; legible and directional signs.
- Consider alternate routes for the truck traffic generated from the Lacooshee Industrial Park and other similar uses.
- Continuous sidewalks are needed along both sides of Cummer Road. Also, sidewalk connections are needed between Cummer Road and key pedestrian areas within the neighborhood such as Lacooshee Elementary School and Stanley Park.
- Crosswalks are needed on Cummer Road at regular intervals not exceeding 300 to 400 feet. In addition crosswalks should be provided at all the intersections. All crosswalks provided away from the intersections should be placed in highly visible locations for safe crossing of streets.
- Introduce landscaping along Cummer Road as a buffer to separate bicycle and pedestrian traffic from other fast moving vehicular traffic on Cummer Road.
- Adopt an overlay district that applies urban design guidelines and strategies, incorporates strategies

for inclusion of more pedestrian generating complementary uses along Cummer Road and therefore helps create a stronger public realm along this major neighborhood spine.

Objective: Improve Access to Neighborhood Attractors and Generators

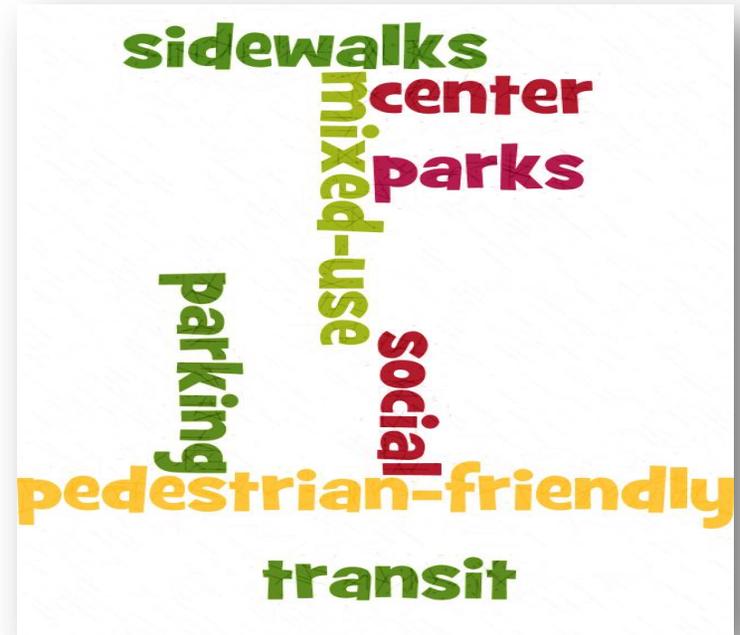
Although the Lacoochee neighborhoods have few components that support a walkable environment, they are lacking adequate infrastructure or the key urban design elements to connect these components into a cohesive pedestrian realm.

Analysis of the existing conditions of the neighborhoods reveal that absence of these urban design features and elements creates a pedestrian environment that is unsafe, uncomfortable, and inefficient. The following section highlights some of these key



deficiencies and provides recommendations on improving them. The walkability analysis in this section evaluates the adequacy and conditions of existing sidewalks, paths and trails, and also suggests strategies for improving connections between key pedestrian generating nodes.

Some of the major generators and attractors of pedestrian traffic in the Lacoochee area include; the residences surrounding Cummer Road, Lacoochee Elementary School, Stanley Park and community center, Cypress Villas, and the small stores close to the intersection of the railway line and Cummer Road.



To create a strong walkable environment within the Lacoochee neighborhoods it is essential to incorporate focused urban design strategies. Some of the aspects that are integral to a safe and comfortable pedestrian environment are; a well-defined center; adequate density; a mix of uses; parks, open spaces and the public realm; complete streets; separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic; transit; and last but not the least, adequately placed and designed pedestrian infrastructure.

Strategies:

- **Create a Center:** A walkable neighborhood should have a well-designed center where people can meet, shop, and engage in other social activities. Currently, there is no defined neighborhood center. There is a community center and a few community oriented uses that are located in close proximity to one another on Cummer Road that could be made into the center for the tri-community area.
- **Mixed use:** To make a neighborhood more walkable, it is recommended that a mix of neighborhood oriented uses be provided within a walkable distance from residences. However, similar to density, the intensity of mixed uses should be adequately chosen, keeping in mind the overall rural character of the Lacoochee area.
- **Parks and the Public Space:** Provide parks and public spaces where people can have opportunities for walking, meeting, and social interaction. Shape public spaces in a manner that enhances pedestrian comfort and safety. Buildings surrounding public spaces should incorporate landscaping, streetlights, and street furniture.
- **Parking and Pedestrian Design:** At the site plan level, buildings should be designed closer to the street with parking lots preferably placed towards the rear or side of buildings. Buildings with parking lots in front do not help in making a neighborhood walkable.
- **Complete Streets:** Streets should be designed for everyone including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and automobile drivers. Sidewalks and access to all public buildings and spaces should be adequately designed as per Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines.
- **Transit:** Provide a transit system with a reasonable level of service to increase walkability within the neighborhood. Wherever necessary, provide sidewalks and pedestrian crossings connecting the transit stops to the major attractors and generators of pedestrian traffic.
- **Slow Traffic:** Except for on the main roads such as the Cummer Road, the speed on neighborhood streets could be reduced using traffic calming measures. Use of landscape buffers and rerouting of vehicular traffic will make Cummer Road safer for pedestrian traffic.
- **Sidewalks:** Provide continuous stretches of adequately sized sidewalks that can support walkability according to the intensity of the use. All sidewalks should be universal in design and in compliance with ADA. Currently, there are a number of streets in the Lacoochee area that lack sidewalks. Existing sidewalks located on some of the streets are too narrow and discontinuous with very few connections between residential areas and the important neighborhood nodes. Also, pedestrian crossings to ensure connections to the sidewalks are missing.

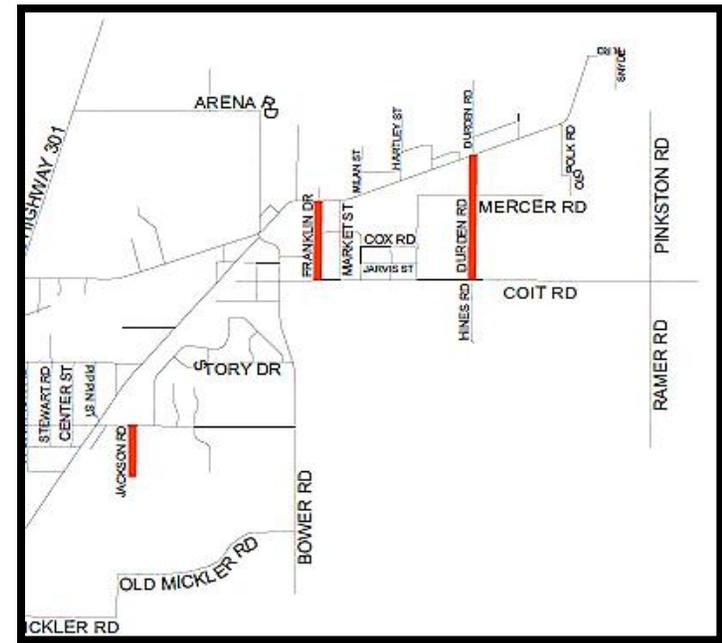
GOAL: Complete Necessary Infrastructure Improvements that Improve Quality of Life for Residents

Objective: Complete Infrastructure Projects Established as Priorities by Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee and with Encumbered Funding.



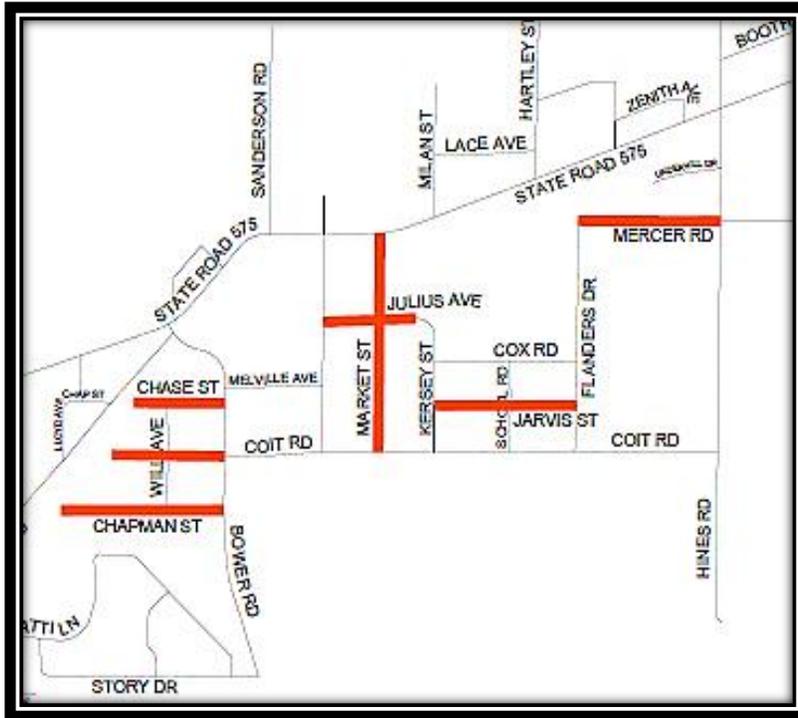
Strategy: Phase I Road Construction; Status: Completed

Phase I consists of three paved roads, providing benefit to 61 lots. The roads are 50 feet wide by plat. The cost of paving was \$435,345.22. The roads in this phase included Jackson Street, Franklin Street, and Durden Road.



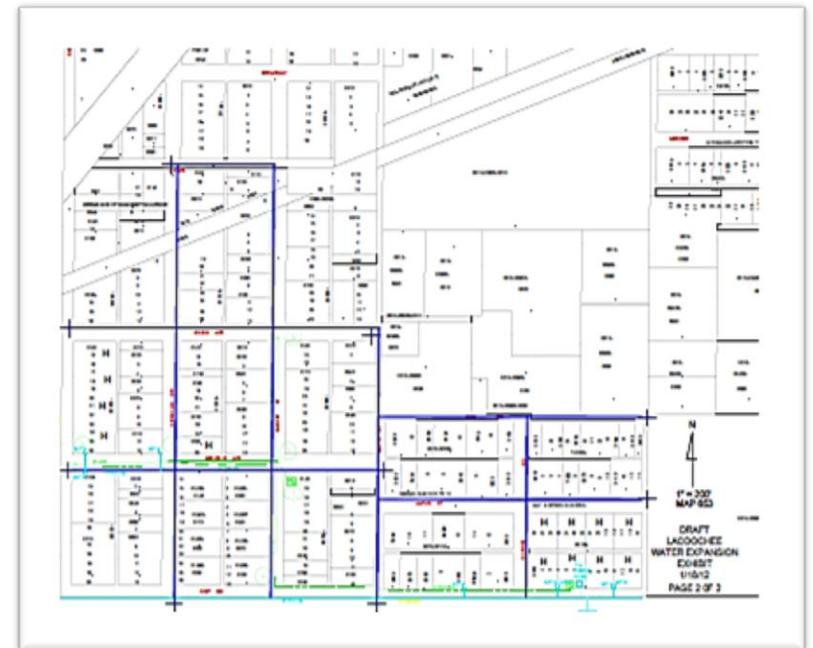
Strategy: Phase II Road Improvements; Status: In Progress

Phase II consists of seven unpaved roads, providing benefit to 74 lots. The roads are 50 feet wide by plat. The estimated cost of paving is \$538,230.18. The roads in this phase include Coit Road from Bower west to the dead-end; Chase Street from Bower Road west to the dead-end; Chapman Street from Bower Road west to the dead-end; Mercer Road from Durden Road west to Flanders Drive; Jarvis Street, Julius Avenue, and Market Street. Coit Road, Chase Street, Chapman Street, and Mercer Road have been completed. Paving will continue once the utility work has been completed.



Strategy: Phase I Utility Improvements (Coinciding with Phase II Road Improvements); Status: In Progress

The BCC approved an estimated cost of \$320,000.00 to expand potable water and fire service protection to eight Habitat homes and the surrounding neighborhoods with the Section 108 amendment. Expansion of the water lines has been completed for the Habitat homes.

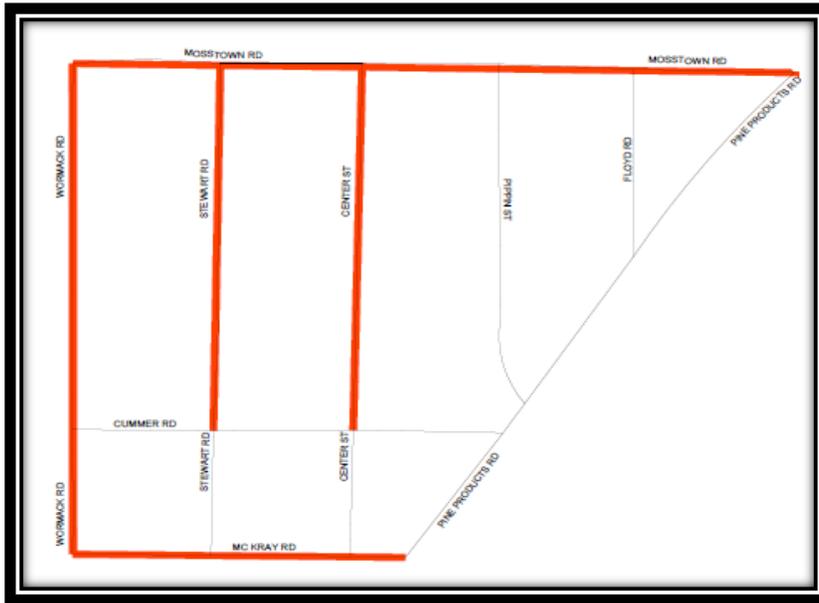


The field survey work and construction plans have been completed for the remaining neighborhood. The Pasco County Utilities Services Branch issued a notice to proceed with pipeline construction to the contractor on September 26, 2014; the right-of-way permit was issued on December 15, 2014.

At the end of December 2014, total utility expenditures were \$98,221.46, which includes the cost to expand services to the community center. A purchase order for the pipeline

construction contractor has been encumbered for \$302,000.00, bringing the total estimated expenditures to \$400,221.46.

Strategy: Phase III Roads; Status: Under Review; Needs Additional Engineering



Phase III consists of five unpaved roads, providing benefit to 83 lots. The roads in this phase are only 30 feet wide, which will require acquisition of additional right-of-way, engineering design, and permitting. While the cost of the additional right-of-way, design and permitting has not been determined, construction cost has been estimated to be \$630,291.52. Engineering design services must be procured to provide a cost benefit analysis determining the feasibility of reducing lot sizes to provide a stormwater management system for roadway construction. Based on the need for additional right-of-way, the public workshop and public hearing for the paving assessment has not been scheduled to receive public comment. The roads in this phase include Mosstown Road from Wormack Road east to Pine

Products Road; Wormack Road from Mosstown Road south to McKray Road; McKray Road from Wormack Road west to Pine Products Road; and Stewart Road and Center Street from Mosstown Road south to Cummer Road.

Objective: Continue to Coordinate with Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee Community and the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners to complete infrastructure improvements for eligible roads and utility lines to enhance quality of life for residents.

Strategy: Future Activities/Approval Requests; Status: Not Yet Approved

The Pasco County Community Development Division (CDD) and the Pasco County Road and Bridge Division have discussed the possibility of adding four additional roads located in the Phase II area to the project.

Will Avenue, Kersey Street, School Road, and Melville Avenue are part of the water expansion project currently underway by the Utilities Services Branch. Paving the roads would provide a benefit to residents of the area. The preliminary estimate to construct the roads is \$220,537.51, and will benefit 33 lots. Staff will bring back a request to the BCC with details of the proposal.

The CDD and the Utilities Services Branch have discussed the possibility of providing potable water and fire hydrants to the residents located in Phase III. The Florida legislature provided funding in the amount of \$500,000.00 to the County to expand and improve the public water supply and system capacity serving the Lacoochee-Trilby community. Adding properly sized water distribution lines will also allow for fire protection services to be provided to the residents. The Section 108 funds can enhance the grant funds by providing for the installation of potable water lines through the neighborhood. The preliminary estimate to add

services is \$300,000.00. Staff will bring back a request to the BCC with details of the proposal.



Objective: Utilize Tax Increment Financing District as a Mechanism to Continue Infrastructure Improvements as Funding is Available and as is Recognized as Important by Residents and Stakeholders

Strategies:

- Complete necessary utility infrastructure.
- Construct or rehabilitate buildings to provide improved quality of life for residents.
- Complete roadway resurfacing, reconstruction, and/or stormwater relief for residents.
- Provide other park infrastructures to enhance youth and family activities in the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee communities.

Emphasis Area 3: Public Services and Safety

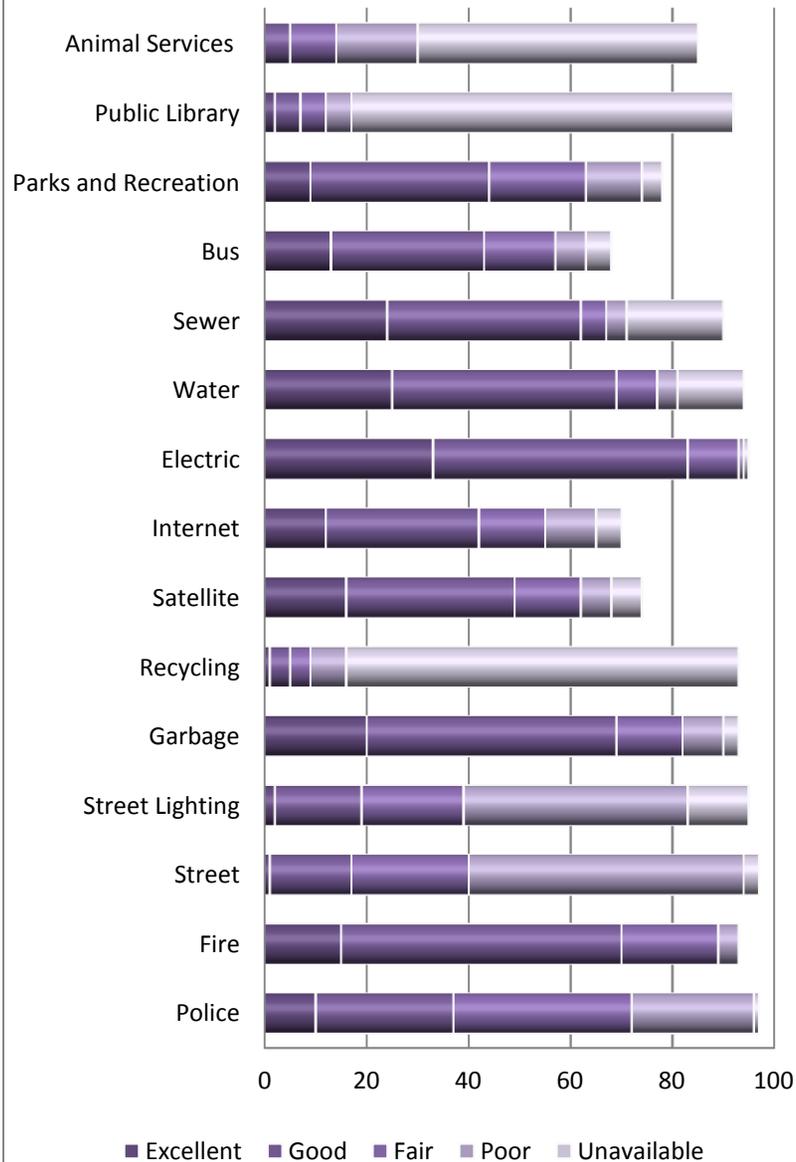
If the average citizen were to drive thru or conduct a Google search of the LTT community, they would be left with the overall impression of an old, rundown, poverty stricken town. The eroding effect of time and lack of infrastructure improvements have combined to make the LTT area unattractive to outside residents. Problem areas include: lack of sidewalks, deteriorating road conditions, lack of community beautification standards, and poor code enforcement.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment



Residents responded to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment reflecting their satisfaction with a variety of public services. Of those services that were considered available, many were rated as poor, including street lighting and street maintenance and repair. Of those services that were considered good or excellent, many are located within the community itself, such as parks and recreation, fire/rescue, and bus services. Many services were indicated as being unavailable by residents, including animal services, libraries, and recycling.

Public Services Satisfaction



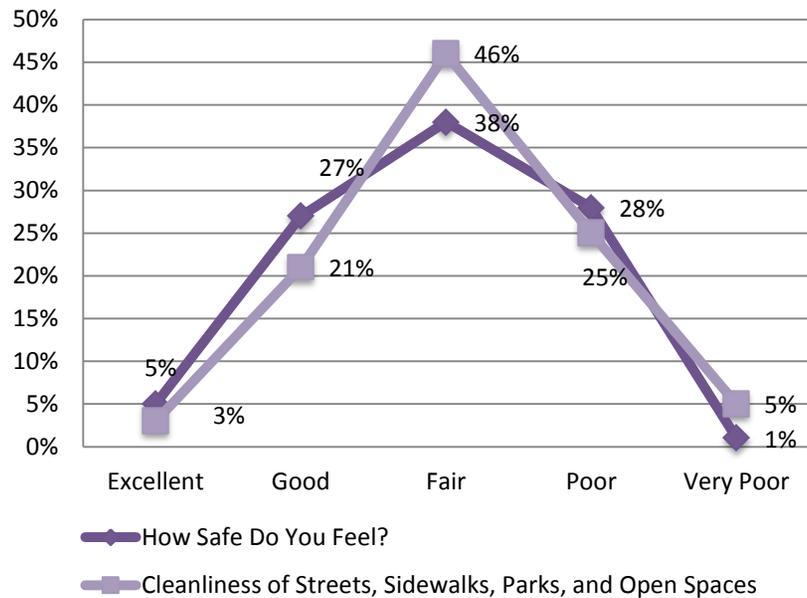
When compared to The National Citizen Survey, Community Livability Report 2014, LTT resident perception ratings were below the benchmark for the rest of the Pasco County (52 percent), and significantly lower than those nationally.



Perception of Public Spaces and Public Safety

When looking at the relationship between the cleanliness of public spaces and public safety, public opinion as it relates to both topics follows the same general trend. It can be assumed that as cleanliness of public spaces increases, public safety perceptions will also increase. Conversely, as public perception of safety increases, pride in the community will also increase, and residents will be more apt to maintain public spaces.

Cleanliness of Public Spaces and Public Safety Perceptions



Two-thirds of residents feel improvements can be made regarding policing of neighborhoods in order to create a safer environment. Further study is indicated when comparing The National Citizen Survey, Community Livability Report 2014, to LTT resident perceptions of neighborhood safety levels. LTT ratings are close to national benchmarks, but significantly lower than those for greater Pasco County (86 percent).

Goal: Improve Public Safety throughout the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee Neighborhoods

Objective: Increase the number of residents that feel safe in their neighborhoods



Strategy: Use Officer Friendly as single point of contact for resident concerns or complaints, providing consistent and reliable resource for residents. Officer Friendly patrols on bicycle and/or foot during each week. Bicycle and foot patrols are a very important part of the Officer Friendly program. This method of patrolling gives the deputy the chance to assist the residents of the community on a one-on-one basis or as a group. Officer Friendly speaks to residents on topics which include awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect, crime prevention and illegal narcotics, and any other topics of which citizens request information. While performing bicycle and foot patrols, Officer Friendly will assist residents with any problems they may have, ranging from neighborhood or juvenile problems to criminal activity. Officer Friendly assists residents and shows that the

Pasco County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff's Office) cares about the community. The bicycle and foot patrols are necessary to help promote and gain the trust and respect of the residents of the housing community.

Specific duties of the Officer Friendly officer include:

- The primary purpose of the program is to have Officer Friendly help unite residents of the targeted population areas, especially children, with law enforcement and members of the Sheriff's Office. The confusion created when police officers are portrayed as friends one day and adversaries the next will be minimized by this service.
- Officer Friendly will present the police in a positive light, as a crime and accident prevention force rather than a reactive punitive force in the community. Officer Friendly will work towards gaining residents' cooperation in combating child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, drugs, and crime.
- Officer Friendly will make scheduled visits to local schools that serve children residing in the targeted area, to make presentations on subjects such as domestic violence, juvenile delinquency, drugs, and crime.
- Officer Friendly will act as a liaison between the residents of the above communities, school officials, and the Sheriff's Office.
- Officer Friendly will assist parents and children in an attempt to reach the best decisions for their families and for the community, by exchanging views and suggesting other alternatives.
- Officer Friendly will establish an after school program for children to seek assistance with

social, school, and domestic problems. Donated space will be used for these programs.

Measurement Tool: The number and percentage responding with either "Good" or "Excellent" ratings on Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Target Audience: The Officer Friendly program is geared toward community policing, primarily serving the residents living in the



Cypress Villas I and II, Cypress Farms, and Cypress Manor Communities. However, the Officer Friendly Office is located at the Lacooshee Community Center, providing ease of access to all residents in the community. In addition, Officer Friendly is heavily involved in many of the community activities in the neighborhoods, become familiar with all residents and their specific concerns.

Needs Assessment Data: Two-thirds of residents feel improvements can be made regarding policing of neighborhoods in order to create a safer environment.

Expected Result: Reduce the percentage of negative responses on future needs assessments by five percent every year.

Responsible Partner and Funding Committed: Officer Friendly is a sworn deputy assigned to the position; the Sheriff's Office has committed to continuing this program, and CDD continues to fund Officer Friendly through Community Development Block Grant funds annually. In addition, the Sheriff's Office receives additional funding through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for this position.

Strategy: Design a street lighting district plan for the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee neighborhoods.

Target Audience: All residents living in the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee communities that currently do not have streetlights.

Needs Assessment Data: Two-thirds of residents feel improvements can be made regarding policing of neighborhoods in order to create a safer environment.

Expected Result: Reduce the percentage of negative responses on future needs assessments by five percent every year.

Responsible Partner and Funding Committed: Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative, Inc., working in partnership with Pasco County. Withlacoochee River Electric Cooperative, Inc., will install the street lights in accordance with the street lighting district plan presented and approved by the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners (BCC); residents benefitting from the street lighting district will pay an annual assessment on their property tax bills.

Emphasis Area 4: Community Pride and Engagement

Goal N4: Increase Engagement of Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee Residents through the Implementation of Community Improvement Programs and Community Based Enforcement

Objective N4-A: Increase community pride and engagement through increased code compliance enforcement and community improvements.

Strategy N4-A.1: Continue to implement the Slum and Blighted Structures program, offering free demolition and clearance services to owners of condemned structures, with the owner's written approval.

Strategy N4-A.2: Use Officer Friendly as single point of contact for resident concerns related to code compliance and building conditions.

Measurement Tool: Increased processing of code compliance violations (Sheriff's Office as well as the Pasco County Code Compliance Division) and building condemnation and/or demolition approvals.

Expected Result: On August 10, 2010, the BCC designated the Lacoochee-Trilby area as a housing target area, also authorizing the free demolition of condemned structures (with the approval of the property owner.) It is anticipated that this program will continue, and will grow as education about the program is increased, and as Officer Friendly continues to be involved in the communication process.

Target Audience: All residents living in the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee Communities.

Needs Assessment Data: Currently there is no baseline data as to the community pride in the Lacoochee-Trilby-Trilacoochee communities. There is an element of community pride that exists throughout the neighborhoods, but many residents are frustrated at the perceived lack of support they receive regarding code compliance, building code violations, and overall quality of life concerns. During the next community survey, questions related to perceived happiness or pride will have to be developed to establish this baseline.

Responsible Partner and Funding Committed: Pasco County already has this program in place; no further funding is necessary.



“The best way to find yourself is in the service of others.”

~ Gandhi